(d) It is ensured that as per policy, recruitment rallies are held for all districts preferably twice a year but not less than once a year.

Defence cooperation with Singapore

795. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Singapore has asked for opening our training facilities to their Armed Forces;

(b) whether India is enhancing defence cooperation with Singapore;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) how far this joint venture would help both the countries to control terrorism?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) There is a proposal by Singapore for use of some facilities of the Indian Armed Forces for training purposes.

(b) and (c) A Defence Cooperation Agreement was signed with Singapore in October 2003. The Agreement visualizes an enhanced level of defence cooperation between Singapore and India. The areas of cooperation identified cover exchange of expertise and personnel, military training, exchange of visits, bilateral naval exercises and participation in defence related seminars and symposia.

(d) Singapore is strategically located in relation to shipping lanes between the Indian Ocean and South China Sea. Both countries are concerned about terrorism in their respective regions and beyond. Cooperation between the two would be beneficial for maritime security and combating international terrorism.

Loss of Jaguar fighters

796. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether two Jaguar fighter aircraft of IAF crashed in Kashmir valley in the first week of April this year;

(b) if so, the cause of crash in each case as established by the statutory inquiries conducted;

(c) the number of Jaguar fighter aircraft lost due to accidents during 2002-2003 and so far during 2004, year-wise;

(d) whether Government are considering any proposal to lay off these aircraft due to high accidents involving them ; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and how the shortfall in fighter aircraft is proposed to be made up?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The cause of the crash has not been established as the Court of Inquiry is still in progress.

(c) A total number of 03 Jaguar aircrafts were lost during the financial year 2002-2003, while 02 Jaguar aircrafts were lost during the financial year 2003-2004. In the current financial year 03 Jaguar aircrafts were lost in two accidents.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Indo-US Defence group meeting

797. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indo-US Defence group met in the month of June and discussed strategic issues and review counter terrorism requirements of India and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;

(b) whether US has shown its keenness on continuing close military ties with India;

(c) if so, whether US has offered missile defence and defence relating technology and combined military exercise;

(d) if so, whether new Government has already approved proposals of US and by what time final agreement is likely to be reached; and

(e) if so, the details of the same?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Indo-US Defence Group met in June, 2004 and reviewed ongoing defence